

Motorists Seek FG's Action After Collapsed Taraba Bridge Claims Lives



dave umahi

By Magaji Hunkuyi

Tue, 12 Aug 2025 6:27:30 WAT



Motorists in Taraba State have expressed growing fear over rising water levels on River Namnai, where the collapse of a key bridge has forced commuters to rely on engine boats — a situation that has already claimed lives and property.

The Namnai Bridge, linking Jalingo and Wukari, collapsed a year ago. Of all the affected federal roads at the time, it remains the only bridge yet to be reconstructed.

The collapse has subjected hundreds of road users to hardship, as they are now ferried across the river on boats.

SPONSOR AD

Locals blame recent heavy rainfall for the increased water levels, which have made the crossing more dangerous.

- [World Bank approves \\$300m to support IDPs in Northern Nigeria](#)
- [Gridlock, flight disruptions as visually impaired protest at Lagos Airport](#)

Two weeks ago, an engine boat carrying passengers and a vehicle capsized, killing three people, including a pregnant woman and a five-year-old boy.

In another incident, Musa Chul, member representing Gassol I constituency in the Taraba House of Assembly, sustained injuries when his boat collided with another.

The Daily Trust crew, a reporter and his cameraman, also narrowly escaped harm during a similar collision while on an assignment.

Drivers say the danger is constant “More than 50 vehicles, including mine, have fallen into the river while being ferried.

“Vehicle owners must hire divers to recover belongings and retrieve vehicles from the river at high cost. We appeal to both the Taraba and federal governments to urgently rebuild the bridge,” said Abubakar Balarabe Musa, a commercial driver.

Rose Dorawa, a passenger, said she spends up to N15,000 to ferry her pick-up loaded with paddy rice across the river, excluding regular transport fees.

Daily Trust findings showed that more than 2,000 vehicles are ferried across the river daily, with engine boat operators charging N3,000 to N5,000 per vehicle.

Chairman of the engine boat operators, Alhaji Mali, said his association deployed over 60 boats to Namnai after the collapse. Operators work in shifts, ferrying vehicles and passengers day and night due to the road’s importance in linking the North-East, South-East, and the Federal Capital Territory.

“Bridges in Adamawa and Gombe that collapsed at the same time have been rebuilt, but ours is neglected despite its economic importance,” lamented Hamisu Adamu of Gassol LGA.

In April, Minister of State for Regional Development, Uba Maigari, promised immediate reconstruction. Governor Agbu Kefas also made similar pledges, but neither has been fulfilled.

Meanwhile, many heavy-duty trucks, luxury buses, and other vehicles now avoid the route entirely, opting for the Jalingo–Garba-Chede–Mutum Biyu–Wukari road to escape the hazards.

The Taraba State chairman of the Inland Water Transporters Association, Alhaji Jidda Mayorennewo, said operators have been instructed to avoid overloading and speeding.

However, he noted that only 100 life jackets have been provided — far short of the 2,000 promised by the state government — despite the heavy passenger traffic.